



**Golden
Empire
Amateur
Radio
Society, Inc.**

www.gearsw6rhc.org

"Dedicated to Public Service"

THE RADIATOR



W6RHC
IRLP #8170

P.O.Box 202 Chico, CA 95927



80 YEARS 1939 - 2019

December 2019 Newsletter

GEARS Founded August 13, 1939

News

It's the holidays, which means the annual GEARS Christmas Party, Friday Dec 20th. If you'd like, please bring a dessert to share and a wrapped gift for the gift exchange. Bring family and guests if you'd like.

We will be offering a ham cram training session on Saturday February 1st. This will be the day before VEC testing. For information contact Rick rick.hubbard.email@gmail.com

We have sent out postcards to all licensed amateur operators in Butte County encouraging them to attend GEARS events. Everyone including guests and GEARS members will be entered in a drawing to win a Yaesu FT-70DR handheld radio. All GEARS events get you an entry into the drawing including meetings, VEC, training and breakfast. Drawing will be held at the March GEARS meeting.

If you haven't already done so, please pay your club dues.

Our new repeater on mount St. John is operating. Give it a try sometime. 145.410 Mhz
PL is 123.0 Negative offset.

Please accept my sincere best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you and your family. I wish all of you good health, happiness and prosperity in 2020.



'73
Jim Matthews K6EST
jiminchico@yahoo.com
530-893-3314



Join GEARS on Facebook
www.facebook.com For
timely news and additional
information.

December 2019 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 2pm VEC Testing	2 7pm GARS Net 8pm ARES Net	3 7:30pm GEARS Net	4	5	6	7
8 8pm OARS Net	9 7pm GARS Net 8pm ARES Net	10 7:30pm GEARS Net	11	12 7pm PARS Net 6:30 GARS Meeting 7:30pm Simplex Net	13 7pm OARS Meeting	14 9am Chico Breakfast GEARS Board Meeting
15 8pm OARS Net	16 7pm GARS Net 8pm ARES Net	17 7:30pm GEARS Net	18	19 7pm PARS Net 7:30pm Simplex Net	20 7pm GEARS Meeting	21 OARS Christmas Dinner
22 8pm OARS Net	23 7pm GARS Net 8pm ARES Net	24 7:30pm GEARS Net	25 Christmas	26 7pm PARS Net 7:30pm Simplex Net	27	28 9am OARS Breakfast
29 8pm OARS Net	30 7pm GARS Net 8pm ARES Net	31 7:30pm GEARS Net				

VEC Testing, FCC License Exam First Sunday of every even numbered month, at the Butte County Search and Rescue Building. Written test at 2:00 pm. For information or registration call Tom Rider, W6JS 514-9211

Chico Breakfast 2nd Saturday of the month 9 am Farmers Skillet 1818, 690 Rio Lindo Ave, Chico

GEARS Board Meeting 2nd Saturday of the month at Vitalant (formally Bloodsource) following the breakfast.

OARS Meeting Second Friday of the month, 7:00 pm, at St. Paul's Church Parish Hall, 1430 Pine St., Oroville

GARS Meeting Second Thursday of the month, 6:30 pm Lutheran Church Hall, 565 Main St. Artois.

Butte ARES Meeting 3rd Tuesday, Except Nov & Dec. at Chico Veterans Hall 7pm. Contact Dale Anderson, KK6EVX 826-3461 for more information.

GEARS Meeting, third Friday of the month, Butte County Search and Rescue Bldg., Chico. Social hour 6:00 pm, meeting at 7:00 pm.

OARS Breakfast 4th Saturday of the month 9am Gold Country Casino & Hotel, 4020 Olive Hwy, Oroville

NETS:

OARS Club Net Sunday 8pm 146.655 Mhz - PL 136.5

GARS Club Net: Monday, 7:00 pm 147.105 MHz + PL 110.09

Butte ARES Net Mondays 8pm 145.290 MHz - PL 110.9

Yuba Sutter Club Net Monday 7pm 146.085 MHz + PL 127.3

GEARS Club Net Tuesdays 7:30 PM 146.850 MHz - PL 110.9

PARS Club Net Thursday 7pm 145.290 - PL 110.9

Simplex Net Thursday 7:30 p.m. 146.52 no tone

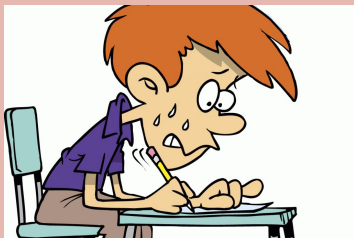
Yuba Sutter ARES Net Thursdays 7pm 146.085 MHz + PL 127.3

Sacramento Valley Traffic Net Nightly 9:00 PM 146.850 MHz - PL 110.9



GEARS Christmas Party

December 20th. Door open at 6pm, Short meeting at 7pm.
Bring a desert and a wrapped gift, around \$10 for the gift exchange.
Both the desert and gift are optional.
Bring friends and guests.



Ham Cram Prep Course

Rick Hubbard is putting together a Ham Cram prep class for anyone who needs to prepare for the Technician Class test. Saturday February 1st, 2020, the day prior to the scheduled February VEC Testing. Let him know if you have anyone who might be interested. Time and location to be announced.

For information contact Rick rick.hubbard.email@gmail.com

My Rediscovery of the Joy of Ham Radio

By Steve Eden, KØSRE
k0sre@arll.net

A ham finds more than a bit of fun using PSK31.

I obtained my Technician class license in 2003 receiving the call KCØPLS. I put up my first homebrew antenna and began playing on 6 meters, VHF and UHF. I used repeaters, satellites, simplex, SSB, EchoLink and packet. This was fun, but the fun was wearing off. I knew I wanted to advance so I could try out more things. I upgraded to General and thought I would be able to try more bands and modes, and make contacts all over the world.

I obtained an HF radio, put up an antenna, got some advice from some of the "more seasoned" hams I knew and I gave it a try. Since I live inside a city, I didn't have a large yard to put up long-wire antennas or a big tower with beam antennas. I read up on antennas and gave a G5RV a try. I tried and tried but nearly all my contacts were in the US with maybe a Mexican contact thrown in. I wasn't able to go up against all those "big guns" with their big towers and legal limit amplifiers that I heard talking all over the world. I changed my antenna to a Carolina Windom, but I quickly became discouraged. Then I got busy with the family duties and taking care of business at work. I didn't try working HF much for quite a while.

Lightning Strikes

Then in the summer of 2009, I started to get into an experimental frame of mind. I had the misfortune of having my home computer damaged by lightning and had to rebuild my system. I started looking and found that I had compiled enough spare parts over the years to build a second computer. It wouldn't be a computer to brag about but I thought I would give it a try. I put the parts together and decided to play with the operating system Ubuntu (Linux). This would be the start of my new quest for personal discoveries through experimentation, which sounds perfect for ham radio, right?

As I was looking through a cabinet, my Signalink USB sound card fell out and hit me on the foot. I had purchased the Signalink a couple of years ago, but had put it away and forgotten about it. I had read an article online about the activities available while working with PSK31 and other digital modes, and how simple it was. This pain in my foot got me thinking that I might want to try the digital modes on my HF radio. It is sometimes amazing at how a pain in the foot gets your mind to whirling.

I put my Ubuntu powered computer next to my radios and started exploring. I found that there were software programs that would control my radio and let me have conversations on HF. The wonderful thing was that there were software programs written for Linux. I picked Fldigi as my program choice and built the cables I needed to connect my computer to the Signalink interface and my Yaesu FT-897. Then I started experimenting. I followed the directions in setting the volumes of the sound card and the transmit power of my radio. I watched the conversations going on to learn how folks passed information. I took a deep breath and typed my first transmission with PSK31, calling "CQ CQ CQ DE KØSRE PSE K."

The World Comes Back

Suddenly, the world of HF opened up and I began to experience the joy and excitement of ham radio like I had never experienced before. In the course of 2 days, I easily made contact with folks in age from their teens to their 80s. I met folks who could type 30 WPM or 10. I made contacts in the US, Canada, Mexico, Venezuela, Cuba, Grenada and France, all on 30 W! I didn't have a big tower with a beam antenna. I didn't have a legal limit amplifier. I found that an amplifier could be a bad thing if you didn't know how to control your signal while using the digital modes.

During the course of my conversations, I found that many of the people I talked to hadn't been on PSK31 for a very long

time. I was complimented at times on the quality of the signal so some of them asked me for help experimenting. I told them how their signal looked as they adjusted their stations. I was asked what happened on my screen when they typed something on their computer. I found a group of people who were experimenting and enjoying their discoveries. I sat in awe at all of the conversations I saw taking place as I looked up and down the waterfall display.

If you have gotten bored or discouraged with your inability to make worldwide contacts, then consider putting in a little time and give PSK31 a chance. It works with all kinds of computers and different operating systems. It works with homebrew interfaces or interfaces you can purchase. Like nearly everything in ham radio, it's what you want to put into it. It gives a small station just as much of a chance to make worldwide contacts as the big guns on SSB. If you decide to give it a try, I hope to have a chance to contact you.

Set up your station, make some contacts, get comfortable with the mode and perhaps enjoy a little contesting or you can just have fun.

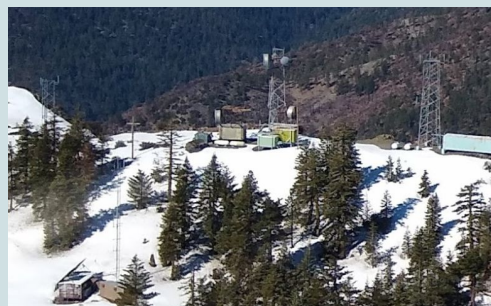
They say you put a new wrinkle in the gray matter of your brain every time you learn something new. I just felt my head and I think there is a new bump showing that wasn't there before.

Steve Eden, KØSRE, an ARRL member, has lived in Camdenton, Missouri at the beautiful Lake of the Ozarks since 1986 where he works in emergency services. His interest in Amateur Radio was started by his good friend Glenn, WØGDF, and he has been in Amateur Radio since 2003 currently holding a General class license. Steve's spouse, Stacy, is also a licensed amateur with the call sign WØSRE. Steve is currently employed as a Sergeant with the Camden County Missouri Sheriff's Office in charge of the E 9-1-1/Communications Division. He is also the Fire Chief for the Camdenton Fire Department and serves on the State of Missouri Region F Tactical Interoperability Communications Planning Committee. Steve can be reached at PO Box 3603, Camdenton, MO 65020.

GEARS / GARS New Repeater

IS ON THE AIR

W6RHC West is 145.410 Mhz
PL is 123.0 Negative offset.



GEARS Century Club Members

Kathy Favor
Rick Hubbard
Bennett Laskey

Thank you very much for your extra support



Win A NEW DIGITAL YAESU FT-70DR RADIO

Attend GEARS events until March 20th and you will be entered in a drawing for a dual-band digital HT. You get an entry ticket each time you visit: GEARS meetings, monthly GEARS breakfasts, GEARS training event or GEARS VEC.

Club Officers:

President.....Jim Matthews, K6EST
Vice-President.....Kent Hastings, WA6ZFY
Secretary.....Stephan Lonis, KM6RSO
Treasurer.....Kathy Favor, K6FAV
Director.....Rick Hubbard, KI6VOS
Director..... Dale Anderson, KK6EVX
Past President.....Tom Rider, W6JS
VEC.....Tom Rider, W6JS

DO YOU HAVE OLD QST MAGAZINES IN SEARCH OF A NEW HOME?

Gene Wright has that future home for your QST's, through his project to place QST Magazines in professional offices throughout Chico. Labels placed on the QST's will advertise the Golden Empire Amateur Radio Society, encourages the readers to consider Ham Radio as an interesting hobby, one of not only fun, but which provides opportunities for many and various community services.

Bring your QST's to Gene at the Club meetings or contact: Gene WA6ZRT 530-519-2519



"The book says you can get a good ground by connecting your equipment to a water pipe."

August 1965 Popular Electronics



December 1965 Popular Electronics

Get Your Amateur Radio License in a Weekend!

GEARS (Chico-based Golden Empire Amateur Radio Society) is offering

No
Morse
Code!

HAM CRAM SESSION

FCC License Test Preparation and Review Session for the
FCC's Entry-level "Technician Class" License

No
Math!
[Almost]

Technician Exam Prep & Review Session
9AM to 4PM on Saturday, 1 Feb 2020

Bring coffee. There will be a 45 minute lunch break.

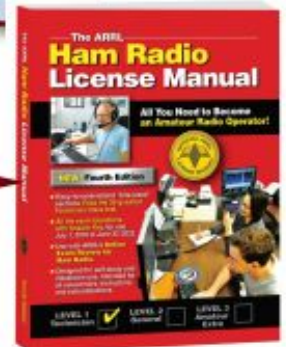
For Location and Registration:

Contact KI6VOS (Rick Hubbard) at
gearsw6rhc@gmail.com, or +1.415.624.5865

*FCC-approved Testing Session * 2PM Sunday, 2 Feb 2020*
Bring a Government Issued ID

Bring Your
Questions!

Prior to the Ham Cram: Read the *ARRL Ham Radio License Manual*
[Level 1 Technician] 4th Edition*



Ham Cram Test Prep & Review Session	FREE (as a Community Service from GEARS)
Required Textbook	Amazon Kindle: ~\$20 Hardcopy: ~\$30
FCC-VEC Testing Fee	\$15 (at the door)

The Ham Cram is a Test Preparation and Review Session led by experience Ham Instructors.

During the Session, participants will complete six, 45-minute drills using actual license pool test questions.

- **Advanced completion of the required reading is essential!**

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE: This is a Test Prep and Review Session; not a training class.

Enroll today, or for more information, contact KI6VOS (Rick Hubbard): gearsw6rhc@gmail.com

*The 4th Edition is required; all prior versions are obsolete.

Other training resources include: <http://www.qrz.com/hamtest/>, <http://hamstudy.org>, [Gordon West Tech Study Guide](#)